

MADRASAH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Presented at the
Third Executive Council Meeting
Term 2011-2014

The Madrasah Centre of Excellence (MCE)

Introduction

The Madrasah Centre of Excellence was formed to ensure that the madrasah agenda of the World Federation is always at the forefront of our leaders and our global organisation. The four work streams which will deliver the tasks will be Curriculum Development, Teacher Training, Learning Resources and Assessment & Evaluation. This report provides an update of the work done and the action plan for the next 12 months.

Vision: Nurturing Piety

Mission: Enabling a learning environment that instils the values of Qur'an and the Ahlul Bayt a.s.

1. Update since the last Executive Council Meeting held in September 2011.

1.1 Naushad Mehrali was appointed as Head of MCE and commenced work on 12 December 2011.

1.2 The following heads of work streams were appointed:

Curriculum Development: Al-Haj Safder Jaffer

Teacher Training:

Learning Resources: Sheikh Jaffer Jaffer

Assessment & Evaluation: Al-Haj Yasin Rahim

The regional bodies appointed the following representatives to MCE:

AFED: Seyed Hassan Naqvi

COEJ: Mahmood Rehemtulla

DUBAI: Mahmood Hooda (temporary)

NASIMCO: Sheikh Hasany Kassamali

1.3 On 1st February 2012 (eve of Eid-e-Zahra a.s.), MCE was formally launched in 25 Jamaats around the world. The presentations were generally received well and volunteers have been joining the work streams.

1.4 A two-day meeting was held on 17/18 March in Birmingham in which the head of MCE, all the work stream heads, members of Islamic Education – World Federation and some office bearers were present.

The main focus of the meeting was to receive reports from each work stream of progress to date and to discuss and agree the action plans for the way forward.

2. Curriculum Development

2.1 A survey of madaris on ideal curriculum requirements was carried out at the end of last year. The results have been analysed and a report prepared. Some of the key findings were:

2.2 The vast majority (74%) of respondents agree on the need for a common global curriculum with regional variation.

2.3 More than half of respondents believe that the traditional core subjects, namely Fiqh, Akhlaq & Tareekh are adequately covered currently.

- 2.4** However, the majority also believe that the current curriculum does not adequately cover Aqaed and Spirituality.
- 2.5** Half of the respondents believe that the current curriculum adequately addresses the needs of the 14+ age group, but the majority concur that the 16+ curriculum is inadequate.
- 2.6** In addition, the majority of respondents believe that the current texts are inadequate to meet the needs of modern times.
- 2.7** The majority believe that the current curriculum lacks concordance with modern education and requires further development to meet with the requirements of our time.
- 2.8** The following areas were seen to be seriously lacking both in content and approach :
- a) Comparative Religion
 - b) Contemporary Threats – for example Sufi'ism, Akhbariat, Terrorism
 - c) Inter-faith challenges
 - d) Youth related issues - media, internet, social networking, gender interaction etc
 - e) Spirituality
- 2.9** In addition, the majority believe that there should be a teacher and parents guide to accompany any standard texts for students.
- 2.10** A madaris analyst has been engaged to collate the curriculums from the main madaris worldwide and to draw up a comparative chart for each major subject by madrasah, by age band, by gender. This work has already started for a pilot tabulation of the subject of Fiqh.

3 Teachers Training

- 3.1** One or two-day training workshops have been held in Mombasa, Nairobi, Dubai, Birmingham and Peterborough.
- 3.2** Discussions have been taking place with a number of institutions, including City & Guilds , for validating a teacher training programme for madrasah teachers. Currently, discussions have been held with the Open University for the validation of the 'Certificate in Islamic Teacher Training and Education'.
- 3.3** Plans are under way to hold a training needs analysis workshop for madrasah teachers in each region. The first workshop will take place in June 2012 for madaris in Europe.

4 Learning Resources

- 4.1** The task of gathering data on madrasah resources currently used globally is under way.
- 4.2** The team has already started investigating current learning resources being used by some madaris and comparing them with different secular education resources to gauge areas for improvement. Initial feedback from educators who are also madrasah teachers has been received for the following madaris sites: madressa.net; dartabligh.org, centremadrasah.com; qfatima.com and madrasah.ca

5 Assessment and Evaluation

5.1 The preliminary standards for assessment of madrasah have been identified. These are:

- The madrasah applies principles of good corporate governance
- The madrasah ensures that teaching is provided by suitably qualified and/or experienced personnel
- There are systems and processes in place to assess progress in the madrasah
- The madrasah has a positive impact in the lives of the children, the parents, the local community and the wider society locally

5.2 The draft process for the assessment and evaluation of madrasah has been prepared and will be co-created during pilot assessments.

5.3 Pilots will be carried out in 6 madaris across all regions. The first pilot will be in Hyderi Islamic School in South London on 12 May 2012. A pre-assessment meeting was held with the madrasah committee on 24 April 2012.

5.4 An assessors training programme took place in Birmingham from 27th to 29th April 2012. It was attended by 23 participants from London, Birmingham, Peterborough, Leicester, Wessex, Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Nairobi, Dubai, Brompton and Allentown. The outcomes of the successful training programme were to provide the participants with:

- a) A common understanding of the work of the Madrasah Centre of Excellence.
- b) An appreciation of adult learning models and its application in assessment and evaluation.
- c) An overview of the madrasah assessment process and its application.
- d) An increase understanding of self and its impact on the assessment process.
- e) An understanding of the concept of “iceberg” and its application to the institution of madrasah.
- f) An opportunity to enhance and practice communication skills required in the assessment process.
- g) An opportunity to compile a draft report for a madrasah

6. General

6.1 Templates have been set up for a Madrasah Profile and Madrasah Teacher Profile which will be shortly available online for every madrasah to complete.

6.2 In order to cope with the IT demands of MCE and other departments of the World Federation, an InHouse Drupal and Developer is being recruited.

7. Plans for the next 12 months

	Objective	Completion
Curriculum Development	Share and evaluate existing curricula by tabulating and analysing themes, subjects, topics	31 Aug 2012 Fiqh, Tareekh, Akhlaq
	Draw up terms of reference and form a panel of experts	31 Aug 2012
	Create a curriculum framework subject by subject	31 Aug 2013 Fiqh, Tareekh, Akhlaq

	Assist madaris with implementation of curriculum framework	w.e.f. Dec 2012
Teacher Training	Hold regional workshops to define training needs for madrasah teachers	31 Dec 2012
	Develop tailored courses for subject and classroom teaching	w.e.f. Aug 2012
	Deliver training courses	w.e.f. Oct 2012
	Partner with training organisations and seek accreditation	30 Apr 2013
	Provide an online platform to represent teachers	31 Dec 2012
Learning Resources	Gather data on Madrasah learning resources currently used globally	31 Aug 2012
	Evaluate resources gathered to identify gaps and compare with secular education resources	31 Aug 2012
	Fill in the gaps	31 Oct 2012
	Develop an online resource bank	31 Jan 2013
	Match resources to curriculum framework	w.e.f. Dec 2012
Assessment & Evaluation	Pilot a process for assessment and evaluation in 6 madaris – Hyderi (South London), Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, Leicester or Peterborough, Orlando, Toronto	31 Mar 2013
	Design methodology for assessment and evaluation of madrasah	31 May 2013
	Conduct training for new assessors in each region	31 July 2013
	Commence real assessment of madaris	w.e.f. Jun 2013
General	Compilation of Madrasah Profile and Madrasah Teacher Profile	31 Dec 2012
	Recruit IT Developer	30 Sep 2012

8. Conclusion

It can be seen that we have been making satisfactory progress but there is a lot of work to be done and it will take time. Our humble request to the community is to be patient and to the councillors is to promote the MCE in their regions.